

2006 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
GLOUCESTER COUNTY

October 31, 2005

This plan has been developed by the Gloucester Department of Health Senior Services to identify the most salient environmental issues within Gloucester County and to propose a plan to address these issues for CY 2006. The Gloucester Department of Health Senior Services is a regional health department established in 1968 by the Board of Chosen Freeholders. All 24 municipalities contract with the department for health services. In 1986, the department became the certified local agency for the provision of environmental health services within Gloucester County under the auspices of the County Environmental Health Act (CEHA).

### The Community

Gloucester County is located in southwestern New Jersey and covers about 328 square miles. Its northwestern boundary is positioned along the Delaware River, with Camden County to the northeast and Salem County to the southwest. The county is highly diverse, with land use patterns that include, older, well-established urban areas; growing suburban areas; heavy industrial complexes; very productive agriculture; extensive woodlands; wetlands and marshes; regional retail facilities; Rowan University, Gloucester County Community College and exceptional public schools; several light industrial parks and traditional small villages. Even though Gloucester County is located within the highly urbanized Philadelphia Metropolitan Region, many parts of the county remain undeveloped. Approximately one-quarter of the county's total land area can be considered developed, including 30,000 acres in residential use, 6,000 acres in industrial use and 3,500 acres in commercial use as of 1990.

Most of the population is settled in the northern and eastern parts of the county in the large suburban townships of Deptford, Monroe, Washington and West Deptford, as well as the more established communities of Glassboro, Pitman and the City of Woodbury. More recently, Harrison and Mantua Townships have experienced rapid growth, while Elk and Woolwich Townships are experiencing rapid growth. This development pattern has radiated out from the northwestern part of the county following along the county's major transportation corridors. Modern industrial parks with value-added distribution centers and light manufacturing facilities are concentrated along I-295 in the western part of the county, including Pureland, one of the nation's largest industrial parks (3,000 acres), located in Logan Township. In addition, two large oil refineries and several chemical plants are located along the I-295 corridor. Recent development has tended to expand outward along and fill in between these corridors with the construction of the NJ Route 55 Freeway.

Gloucester County Population estimates from Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

|             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| <b>2001</b> | <b>253,500</b> |
| <b>2005</b> | <b>265,500</b> |
| <b>2010</b> | <b>278,950</b> |
| <b>2025</b> | <b>322,500</b> |

### Local Environmental Issues

Given its diverse land use, past and present industrial uses, and situation as a major traffic corridor, Gloucester County has its share of environmental issues. These issues will be addressed through each major program area.

### Hazardous Materials

Gloucester County has formed a hazardous materials team through the OEM. The Gloucester County Department of Health and Senior Services has entered into an interagency agreement with OEM. OEM will provide a CBRNE team for our county.

A cost recovery ordinance was adopted by the Chosen Board of Freeholders in 2005. NJDEP approved the ordinance for use.

### Water Pollution

Ground and surface water pollution are the largest program area in the department. Well and septic system installations have mushroomed in the developing areas of the county. Development in the more rural areas has continued to be the trend. Septic systems are the primary source of sewage disposal in these areas. The approval and installation of septic systems continues to be a major effort in the department.

Surface waters are used for swimming at 15 lakes within the county. The dry weather this season resulted in no closures for public bathing lakes. The weather resulted in less non-point pollution discharges into the surface water system.

Our department continued to provide sample collection for surface water monitoring for NJDEP. One site was added to the program for a total 7 collection sites. All sampling was completed in 2005. The Alcyon Lake watershed study is funded through the Gloucester County Planning Department. Our Department anticipates collecting several rounds of sampling for this project in 2006 to complete this project.

### Safe Drinking Water

Ground water is the major source of drinking water in the county. Most municipal supplies rely on the PRM and Kirkwood Cohansey formations for water. Most of the developed municipalities have contracted with New Jersey American Water Co. to comply with withdrawal restrictions in the PRM aquifer. Restrictions for public water have resulted in many new developments utilizing private water wells.

Ground water sampling of private wells for mercury and volatile organic compounds (VOC) continued. Results of contamination were reported through the Private Well Testing Act (PWTA) and the approval of new and replacement wells. Fourteen different areas within the county were surveyed for the presence of mercury and VOC. An additional contaminated well area was identified in Elk Township as a result of our sampling program. Many exceedances for gross alpha activity, nitrates, volatile organic compounds, and mercury were found from the

PWTA results and from the approval of new and replacement wells. Our department has sent out informational materials to those surrounding residences.

### Air Pollution

Air pollution in Gloucester County, not unlike other metropolitan areas is at times the County's most visible environmental issue. It originates from a mix of mobile, area and point sources with a significant contribution from sources outside the County. Congestion on the major roads through the County contributes to the air pollution problem. Gloucester County has been found to exceed the particulate and ozone standards.

Gloucester County continues to identify and inspect minor source facilities through the CEHA program. The idling enforcement program began in 2005 to curtail the idling of diesel powered vehicles for greater than 3 minutes.

### Solid Waste

The department has an interlocal agreement with GCIA for recycling enforcement inspections. Transportation routes have been a problem in the county since the approval of the Gloucester County Solid Waste Complex. The approved routes to the landfill and the resource recovery facilities utilize federal highways. Solid waste vehicles do not meet the weight limit for federal highways. Therefore, they violate the solid waste transportation routes or the federal weight limits. The department has enforced solid waste routes on a complaint basis.

Our procedure as outlined in our 2005 solid waste plan called for a violator to have 30 days to correct a violation. There was an additional 14 days given to correct after reinspection. Enforcement action would then be utilized. The enforcement procedure has been modified for 2006 to conform with the 30 day grace period policy for certain violations.

Emphasis in 2006 will be to ensure that exempt recycling facilities are formally approved by the state. Several farm mulch sites have been on the list of our facilities and have not received NJDEP approval or have ceased operations.